

**Understanding the relationship between adjective, noun and verb categories in the
Farefari language**

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This paper focuses on the adjective in Farefari. Farefari, is a Gur language spoken in northern Ghana and across the border in south east of Burkina Faso. I intend to establish the grammatical relation between the adjective on the one hand and the noun and adjective on the other. Dixon (1982) claimed that natural languages manifested two main lexical categories, namely noun and verbs. This partly led to his conclusion at the time that some languages lacked adjectives. Thompson (1988) supported this view using what she called the discourse approach. Dixon and Aikhenvald (2004) retracted the earlier position on the some languages lacking adjectives they still maintained the position that adjectives derive mostly from nouns and adjectives. It has often been claimed that African languages have a small closed non-derived class (Welmer 1973; Creissels 2000; Ameka 2005). They derive adjectives from either verbs or nouns. In Farefari, adjectives derive from verbs but take affixes and markers that are identical to class affixes. These markers on the adjectives may be partly attributed to the noun class and concord system. Adjectives behave morphologically and distributionally as nouns. I intend to discuss the complex relation between the adjective and the noun and verb using copious data from Farefari and some closely related languages. Ultimately, the paper aims at the contributing the debate and consequently the understanding of the adjective as a lexical category and its relation with other word classes in African languages.